

Speech by Prime Minister Maurice Bishop.

Gentlemen;

I want to use these brief few moments and I hope not to be long, within five minutes at maximum to just say a very few words on the present situation in our region.

Because there will not be time to go into details on this, I want to forecast on what Grenada regards as being the main feature of this present period.

For us this main feature, Mr. Chairman, is as follows:

One we have seen definite evidence of stepped up military manoeuvres in Central America and now for the first time in the Eastern Caribbean also in a very big way.

The second bit of evidence I will offer is the stepped up military budget of some countries in this region and internationally. This stepping up of a military standing has been in fact quite dramatic.

We have seen that military credits have now been given for the first time, even to countries in the Eastern Caribbean, in the English speaking Caribbean. And this is an entirely new development and it is an indication indeed of the serious new threat that the region faces.

Recently we in Grenada did some figures and what we discovered is that the total spending on arms race world-wide and it would mean something like 17.143 years of money for Grenada to spend in our presently current budget. That is the amount of money that is now being spent on this arms race that we sit and regard as being totally unnecessary.

Mr. Chairman the question of areas type flights has also been a feature of this period.

In Grenada we have had very insistent and unnecessary violations of our air space over the past three months in particular and certainly it has also become a feature of this region that these areas type flights we regard as extreme provocation as being violations of our sovereignty there is definite evidence that this has been stepping up over the past few months.

Another point we will mention very quickly is the emergence of two new doctrines in particular. One doctrine is called international terrorism and the other one is called linkage. Both of these concepts are regard as being extremely enemical to the cause of peace.

Under this doctrine of international terrorism what is being argued is that the question of human rights in the world is no longer important.

What is being argued is that it is no longer necessary to attack the Chiles, Paraguays, the Haitis, the South Africa. No international terrorists have become socialist forces of all types around the world.

International terrorists have become the national liberation movements. International terrorists have become progressive forces generally around the world.

This is a convenient and easy way of abandoning the old carded doctrine of human rights. It now requires only that you label a particular country as a terrorist, a particular organization as terrorist and in so doing you justify any attempted intervention that at some time you might use to implement.

We regard this as being an extremely dangerous concept. More than that it has the effect of psychologically preparing the people of the United States for possible intervention.

Because under this doctrine what is now being alledged is that the reasons for the problems economically, the reasons for the economic recessions inside the U.S. itself has to do with the so-called international terrorists.

And therefore in one movement, not only is a convenient pretext being found for justifying problems internally but in that same movement you are able to label a number of movements, a number of parties, organizations, countries around the world with whom you have differences, terrorists and therefore you can justify any attack whatsoever against them.

The second concept linkage we also regard that as a dangerous concept. Under this doctrine it is being said that if something happens in one part of the world with which we disagree, then you have the right to take retaliatory action in a different part of the world.

So if something happens in a different part of the world thousands of miles away from Latin America and the Caribbean, it now gives the excuse to take retaliatory action let us say in El Salvador. That again we believe is a very false and very dangerous doctrine, one that can only lead to renew tension to certainly cause many people in the region to have serious concerns about the possibilities of achieving peaceful and progressive development.

Mr. Chairman, the problem of El Salvador itself greatly concerns the people of Grenada. We reject all together the

notion being put about in some section of the media that what is happening in El Salvador is a struggle between the lunatic fringe on both sides. It is a fight between minority elements of the ultra-left and minority elements of the ultra-right. We reject that.

We believe very firmly and very sincerely that a vast majority of people in El Salvador, the workers, the farmers, the youth, the vast majority of patriotic democratic and progressive forces in that country in fact of finding themselves lined up against a junta, a repressive army and a very tiny section of the people who are opposed to the people moving forward to achieving social progress.

We certainly feel that the call of the Socialists International for a political solution is an important step forward. We certainly support very strongly a mediation attempt that has been put forward by the Socialists International. We believe that Willy Brandt is an excellent choice as mediator for these attempts. We recognize that the junta itself, that the forces ranged against the junta represented by the Revolutionary Democratic front, represented by the F.M.N.L. Movement have accepted in principle this offer of mediation.

Only the U.S. has rejected this. We believe that this Conference should certainly once again call on that government to accept the principle of mediation so the region can move forward in peace.

Mr. Chairman, the final point, the question of Panama, the question of Nicaragua, the question of Cuba. Our views, we believe that the people of Panama have a right to their own canal, we believe that the Carter-Torrio's treaties have legal effect and sanction. We believe therefore that any attempt now to try to reclaim as private property the Panama-canal, will only endanger the cause of peace in this region. We believe too that the peoples of Nicaragua and of Cuba, both have the right to their own existence. Both have the right to determine their own possessive, both have the right to determine how they want to live in their own countries. We believe that is the right of all of the peoples of Latin-American and this is the firm position of our government, our party, our people.

Mr. Chairman, three proposals coming from Grenada:

The first, we want to use the occasion of this very historic very significant congress to renew our call that the Caribbean sea should be declared a zone of peace. We have been making this call since La Paz, Bolivia in 1979, the

OAS Conference, we have renewed this call in the non-alien forum and in the U.N. and to-day we feel that it is more urgent than ever that this call in fact is recognized in practice.

What this means in practice: an end to military maneuvers in the region, military maneuvers outside of your countries own soil and territory. Secondly in practice this should mean an end to all military basis in the region where the people of a particular country have withdrawn their consent for basis to be present. Thirdly we feel very strongly that this should also mean a total and absolute prohibition of the entry into this region of all nuclear weapons. We feel that is extremely important. Fourthly we believe that this concept of the Caribbean Sea as a zone of peace at a minimum, should also entrench the important principle that all policies of destabilization whether propaganda destabilization, whether economic destabilization, whether military or terrorist destabilization, should be ended.

We believe too that all policies of isolation, all policies of blockade should also be brought to an end.

If these things are implemented then the region in fact would have an opportunity of being able to live in peace.

Mr. Chairman, secondly, a number of broad principles that have been repeated several times before in a few seconds, let me say them again.

We believe that all the peoples of the region have a right to legal equality, regardless of their size.
We believe that all the peoples of the region have a right to mutual respect for sovereignty.
We believe that all the peoples of the region have a right to non-interference in their own internal affairs.
We believe that all the peoples of the region have a right to build their own possessions, free from all forms of aggression, free from all forms of outside threat, from all forms of aggression.
We believe that the people of the region alone have the right to determine how their country should be built and to decide what they must do with their national and natural resources, to decide who their friends must be, to decide what kind of foreign policies they must pursue. No one else can tell that to them.

We believe therefore that the time is long overdue, when the concepts of backyardism, of interventionism; that all of these concepts should hurriedly be thrown into the wastepaper bin of history. People must move forward.

Mr. Chairman to close, our firm conviction is that the number one question in the world is peace. The number one question in our region is peace and therefore all calls for disarmament, all calls for reduction in the stock piling of nuclear arms, all calls for reduction in military expenditures and military budgets, all of these calls we support and support fully.

We believe, Mr. Chairman, that without peace in this region and without peace in this world, there is absolutely no chance for any of our countries to achieve peaceful and progressive development. And therefore the foreign policy aspects of what the countries domestic policy is is an obvious link and we believe that is a link that we must recognize and we must struggle for.

Mr. Chairman, it is very important that we in the Caribbean we, who are members of the Socialist International, we who belong to the organization of American states, we who belong to the Caricom organization for the English-speaking Caribbean, we who belong to the United Nations, all of us, utilizing all of these regional and international organizations, must join hearts and hands fully to struggle for the cause of world-peace, for the cause of regional peace, so as to ensure that all of our peoples will be able to go forward hand-in-hand to the peaceful and progressive future that we all look forward.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

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Aruba, March 19, 1981.